

CHAPTER 4  
SECTION 4.5

## BRACHYTHERAPY/RADIATION THERAPY

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### I. PROCEDURE CODE RANGE

77326-77328, 77750-77799, 79440

### II. DESCRIPTION

Brachytherapy is a type of radiation therapy in which the radiation source is placed within or very close to the body area being treated. Brachytherapy involves the use of radioactive isotopes as the radiation source, permanently or temporarily implanted, in the form of wires or seeds, into or near malignant tumors that are unresectable or recurrent following previous resection or radiotherapy. Commonly used radioisotopes include gold ( $^{198}\text{Au}$ ), iodine ( $^{125}\text{I}$ ), iridium ( $^{192}\text{Ir}$ ), californium ( $^{252}\text{Cf}$ ), cesium ( $^{137}\text{Cs}$ ), and palladium ( $^{103}\text{Pd}$ ).

### III. POLICY

A. Benefits may be extended for brachytherapy.

B. Radioactive chromic phosphate synoviorthesis in the treatment of hemophilia patients with hemarthrosis and/or synovitis is covered when the medical record documents that more conservative therapies have failed. CPT codes that apply are:

1. 79440 "Intra-articular radionuclide therapy".
2. 77750 "Infusion or instillation of radioelement".

### IV. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A. There are no categorical limitations on the use of brachytherapy, and indications and patient selection will vary as with any other form of radiotherapy.

B. Following is a list of conditions for which brachytherapy has been used. This list is not all-inclusive and should not be used as such:

1. Cervical, uterine and prostate cancer.

2. Brain tumors, alone or combined with external beam radiation therapy.
3. Palliative treatment of bronchogenic carcinoma.
4. Adjuvant therapy of:
  - a. Breast cancer.
  - b. Renal cell carcinoma,
  - c. Skin cancer.
  - d. Head and neck cancer.
  - e. Choroidal melanoma.
  - f. Pancreatic carcinoma.
  - g. Liver metastases.
  - h. Bile duct carcinoma.
  - i. Vaginal and vulvar carcinoma.
  - j. Bladder carcinoma.
  - k. Sacral chordoma.
  - l. Childhood and adult sarcomas.
  - m. Esophageal carcinoma.
  - n. Retinoblastoma.
  - o. Rectal carcinoma.

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